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# NAMES IN THE NEWS: CHARLIE CRIST vs. MARCO RUBIO

FUNDRAISING POWERHOUSE ENTERS RACE  
TO BECOME FLORIDA'S U.S. SENATOR

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## Fast Facts

- Charlie Crist raised \$24.5 million in his 2006 bid for governor—more than the combined total of all of his opponents in the primary and general election.
- 40 percent of Crist's money came from individual donors, while 27 percent came from businesses and special interest groups. In contrast, challenger Marco Rubio received much more of his money from businesses and special interest groups, who gave him three-quarters of his campaign funds. Individuals gave Rubio only 22 percent of his funds.

## CHARLIE CRIST

On May 12, 2009, Florida Gov. Charlie Crist announced his run for the United States Senate seat held by retiring Republican Sen. Mel Martinez. Crist is the first Florida governor not to seek reelection since the state constitution was changed in 1968.<sup>1</sup>

Crist has been a figure in Florida politics since 1992, when he was elected to the Florida Senate. He served there until 1998, when he made his first bid for the U.S. Senate, unsuccessfully challenging then-incumbent Senator Bob Graham. In 2000, he was elected Florida Commissioner of Education; in 2002, he was elected Attorney General. Crist was elected to his current position as governor in 2006.

The National Institute on Money in State politics has collected state-level campaign finance reports in Florida since 1998. In that time, Crist raised \$28.3 million in his various bids for statewide office, consistently raising more money than his general election opponents. Crist raised more money during his 2006 gubernatorial campaign than any other governor in the last decade — \$24.2 million — more than the combined total of all of his opponents in the primary and general election. As a point of comparison, former Gov. Jeb Bush raised \$8.9 million in 1998 and \$10.3 million in 2002 to win his elections.

### CRIST'S FUNDRAISING OVER THE YEARS

ELECTION YEAR	OFFICE	STATUS	TOTAL	GENERAL ELECTION OPPONENT	TOTAL
2000	Commissioner of Education	Won	\$1,636,915	Sheldon, George H.	\$589,962
2002	Attorney General	Won	\$2,466,860	Dyer, Buddy	\$2,025,142
2006	Governor	Won	\$24,161,948	Davis, Jim	\$10,490,233
TOTAL			\$28,265,723		

<sup>1</sup> Beth Reinhard, "Gov. Charlie Crist announces bid for U.S. Senate," *Miami Herald*, May 12, 2009, available from <http://www.miamiherald.com/news/breaking-news/story/1044168.html>, accessed May 12, 2009.

Contribution limits meant that Crist's campaign funds for his 2006 governor's race came from a multitude of donors. (Florida's campaign finance laws prohibit donors from giving more than \$500 to a candidate per election.) More than 2,800 donors gave Crist the maximum of \$1,000 (\$500 for the primary and \$500 for the general). In the aggregate, however, Crist raised the most money--\$4.5 million--from party committees, which are unrestrained by contribution limits. The next biggest economic sector to donate was finance, insurance, and real estate, which gave \$3.1 million. Lawyers & lobbyists gave Crist \$1.8 million, followed by almost \$1 million from the health sector.

The Florida Department of Elections provides some matching funds to candidates for governor or cabinet-level offices. Crist received \$3.3 million in public funds.

\$9.7 million (40 percent) came from individual donors, while \$6.6 million (27 percent) came from businesses and special interest groups.

**TOP ECONOMIC SECTORS  
CONTRIBUTING TO CRIST, 2006<sup>2</sup>**

ECONOMIC SECTOR	TOTAL
Party	\$4,511,803
Public Subsidy	\$3,309,338
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	\$3,116,795
Lawyers & Lobbyists	\$1,804,643
Health	\$997,810
Other/Retiree/Civil Servants	\$763,173
Construction	\$633,250
General Business	\$590,374
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$15,727,186</b>

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<sup>2</sup> Classified based on campaign finance reports. Florida law requires that candidates report the occupation, but not the employer of donors. The Institute was able to classify 69 percent of Crist's contributions. The remainder have generic (e.g. "Business Executive," "Owner") or blank occupations and are unclassifiable.

## MARCO RUBIO

At present, Crist's most prominent opponent is former Florida House Speaker Marco Rubio. While races for the Florida House of Representatives do not attract nearly as much money as a governor's race, Rubio has a history of significant fundraising, collecting \$713,615 over five elections between 2000 and 2008. From 2006 to 2008, he served as Speaker of the House. In 2008, Rubio lost in the primary to challenger Lake Ray.

### RUBIO'S FUNDRAISING OVER THE YEARS

YEAR	OFFICE	STATUS	TOTAL
2000	House of Representatives	Won <sup>3</sup>	\$21,500
2002	House of Representatives	Won	\$76,554
2004	House of Representatives	Won	\$287,784
2006	House of Representatives	Won	\$228,374
2008	House of Representatives	Lost Primary Election	\$99,403
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$713,615</b>

Those in the finance, insurance, and real estate economic sector gave \$118,550, which was 17 percent of Rubio's funds over the years. The health sector came in second, at \$91,999. General business interests, including major contributors from gambling, alcohol, and retail sales, came in third. Businesses and special interest groups gave Rubio three-quarters of his campaign funds; individuals gave 22 percent.

### TOP ECONOMIC SECTORS CONTRIBUTING TO RUBIO, 2000-2008<sup>4</sup>

ECONOMIC SECTOR	TOTAL
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	\$118,550
Health	\$91,999
General Business	\$69,625
Lawyers & Lobbyists	\$68,600
Transportation	\$31,000
Energy & Natural Resources	\$30,450
Construction	\$28,149
Communications & Electronics	\$25,950
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$464,323</b>

—END—

<sup>3</sup> Special election held Jan. 25, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Classified based on campaign finance reports. Florida law requires that candidates report the occupation, but not the employer of donors. The Institute was able to classify 73 percent of Rubio's contributions. The remainder have generic (e.g. "Business Executive," "Owner") or blank occupations and are unclassifiable.